

Community Health Cell

Library and Information Centre

367, "Srinivasa Nilaya"

Jakkasandra 1st Main,

1st Block, Koramangala,

BANGALORE - 560 034.

Phone : 553 15 18 / 552 53 72

e-mail : chc@sochara.org

Separated Children in Asia

A Status Report Prepared for Everychild

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ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARV:	Antiretroviral treatment
CARA:	Central Adoption Resource Agency
CACL:	Campaign Against Child Labour
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRY:	Child Relief and You
CSEC:	Commercial sexual exploitation of children
ECPAT:	End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GMS:	Greater Mekong Sub-region
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
FORCES:	The Forum for Crèche and Child Care Services
ICCW:	Indian Council of Child Welfare
ICDS:	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ILO:	International Labour Organization
INS:	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
IPEC:	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LBW:	Low Birth Weight
MHRD:	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MICS:	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NACS:	National Aids Control Society
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NIPCCD:	National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development
SCADP:	Street Children Assistance Development Programme
SCUK:	Save the Children UK
STI:	Sexually transmitted infections
TB:	Tuberculosis
UNAIDS:	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCRC:	United Nations Child Rights Convention
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIAP:	United Nations Interagency Project
USAID:	United States Agency for International Aid

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment of the situation of child separation in Asia and the extent of the problem was carried out with the following objectives

- To identify the forms of child separation in Asia
- To assess the magnitude of child separation in Asia
- To assess the major causes and issues related to child separation in the region
- To identify the most vulnerable target groups of children in the context of separation
- To identify the existing interventions and the organizations working for separated children in the region
- To identify the gaps in existing interventions for separated children
- To identify the priority interventions and target groups

The countries covered for the assessment included Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. The study used both secondary and primary data. For South Asia, the primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with 20 key informants located in four Indian cities. They are government officials, those who are working with NGOs and child researchers. Primary data for Southeast Asia were collected through interviews with 7 key informants and focus group discussions with children in Cambodia. Secondary data were collected from sources like government reports and documents, research studies, documents available with international and national level NGOs, and from the Internet.

The major forms of child separation in the region are

- Child Labour
- Children Used for Commercial Sex
- Street Children
- Trafficked/Voluntarily Migrated Children
- Children Affected by HIV/AIDS
- Children in Residential Care

In addition to these main categories, it was observed that children affected by war, conflicts and natural disasters is becoming important category of separated children in the region with increasing instances of internal conflicts and frequently occurring natural disasters. Among the above-mentioned categories, child labour and street children are the two important types of separated children in South Asia. In Southeast Asia, children exploited for commercial sex and those who are trafficked or voluntarily migrated are the most important categories. In both regions, it is expected that, HIV/AIDS would become a major factor resulting in child separation in the near future.

There is no regional level statistics available on child separation; however, data on the magnitude of each form of separation is available at the national level. Yet, there are variations across nations on the extent of data availability, the reliability of the data and also on the forms of separation.

The primary causes for the child separation are poverty, landlessness and rural unemployment. Unpleasant family atmosphere, domestic violence, breaks down of families, corporal punishment at home and at schools is also cited as important causes. Children becoming orphans due to various reasons results in their being separated from the family. Market related reasons such as the demand for children for commercial sex, demand for child labour because of the low cost involved and the perceived suitability of children for certain kind of jobs contribute to child separation in the region.

Though there are many interventions directed at prevention of child separation, their coverage in terms of the type of separations, the needs addressed, and the geographical coverage are limited and vary from nations to nation and more particularly between South Asia and Southeast Asia. The analysis of the situation of separated children and the nature of current interventions revealed many gaps and the study identified several priority areas for intervention in general and for EveryChild in particular.

- The interventions on child separation should be both preventive and curative and provide care for children who are already separated.
- The preventive actions may range from conscientising the children about their rights to community based interventions and advocacy at various levels.
- As poverty and rural unemployment are two primary reasons for child separation in the region, attempts should aim at income generation in rural areas and teaching of skills to increase their employability.
- Primary education should become a priority area of intervention aimed at increased enrolment, prevention of dropouts, and reducing gender gaps, by making education accessible and attractive for all groups.
- Children lack knowledge about trafficking and other potentially dangerous situations. Life Skills education is an important area that can help in preventing child separation and child trafficking.
- Institutional care when unavoidable should be kept to a possible minimum period. The thrust should be on reintegration of the child with the family and the community as early as possible.
- Institutional care should focus on quality and overall development of the child rather than focus only on survival. It needs to ensure that children are provided with a family atmosphere to the extent possible.
- The community should be equipped to act as a pressure group. Quite often, the community at large is not aware of the consequences of child separation or even fails to acknowledge its existence.
- Community based interventions are required to prevent family breakdowns. In restoring separated children to their families, counseling would be required at the family level.
- There is an urgent need to compile a profile of separated children in individual countries in the region as the existing information is scattered, and at times outdated.
- Networking of NGOs and international agencies working for separated children should be treated as a priority area.
- Creating a forum of organizations working for separated children in the region is important.
- One needs to mobilize support from the corporate sector and support from faith based organizations in dealing with the issues of child separation
- Child participation in programmes for separated children should be encouraged.
- Interventions should aim also at educating the employers of child labourers on the rights of children.
- Attempt should be made to comprehensively map the existing interventions in the region.
- Advocacy efforts are required for establishing appropriate legislation and also to scale up the existing government interventions. Organizations involved in these activities should be supported.
- Advocacy efforts are needed to reduce stigma and discrimination of survivors of child trafficking and those affected by HIIV/AIDS.

SEPARATED CHILDREN IN ASIA

1.0 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The social, economic and cultural situations in South Asia are fast changing. These changes are characterised by increased marginalisation and decline in agriculture resulting in rural-urban migration. Breaking down of social network of families and family violence resulting in family breakdown are becoming more frequent. The economic reforms initiated by the governments benefit only a small section of the population. As children are one of the most affected groups of the negative consequences of such changes, the situation regarding child separation may worsen in the region in the future.

EveryChild UK (EvC) works for a world *where children are safe and secure*. It has projects in 18 countries distributed in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

EvC is undergoing a strategic planning process and its management has held several workshops and meetings in the UK to define major directions of the organization. Pertinent to its work, EvC has defined separation, and has also identified issues common to all the regions surrounding separation. EvC also defined its priority interventions to address common issues particularly with regard to pre- and post-separation. EvC intends to work in the long terms in Asia, Africa, and FSU moving towards Central Asia.

A regional assessment was carried out, in South and South-East Asia. The purpose of this external analysis was to carry out an in depth analysis of key separation issues and causes prevailing in the region with the end in view of identifying which of the top priority interventions EvC identified are most suitable and appropriate.

The results of the analysis will be used:

1. To inform the organizational strategy being prepared for presentation to the Board in October
2. As basis for the detailed strategic planning workshops in each region.

EveryChild works with children in 18 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. The workshop held in August 2005 decided to direct the attention on separated children in a focussed way. A study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To identify the forms of child separation existing in Asia.
- To assess the major issues and causes of separation of children
- To identify the extent of separation and the most vulnerable target groups of children in the context of separation.
- To identify the interventions that are most suitable in addressing the issues
- To identify the organisations that is working with the separated children.
- To identify the priority interventions and the target groups.
- To identify the existing and potential funding opportunities for intervention.

The study used both secondary and primary data. For South Asia, the primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with 20 key informants located in four Indian cities (3 metropolitan areas), who were government officials, directors of INGOs and officials of the NGOs working at various levels for the welfare of children. Based on the objectives of the study, an interview guide was prepared to conduct in-depth interviews with the key informants. Though the study was to cover the whole of Asia, given the constraints of time and the resources, it was agreed that primary data would be collected only from the key players in India. For India as well as for other countries in the region, data were collected from secondary sources like the government reports and documents, research studies carried out on

issues related to children, documents available with INGOs and NGOs, and information available in the internet.

For Southeast Asia, while a large part of the information was obtained from secondary sources, key informant interviews were conducted with 7 key informants. Key informants were selected using the notes on 5 August Workshop on Separation as a guide for identifying focal persons. This document identified family violence, abuse of children, selling of children, sending them away to work and trafficking as common separation issues in the region. These issues coincided with the regional programme of the International Labour Organization-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) and the work of the child protection unit of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Hence, representatives from these organizations served as key sources of information, both primary and secondary. In addition to the secondary data obtained from these organizations, Internet searches were carried out. To obtain the views of children belonging to different age groups regarding separation focus group discussions were held in Cambodia. A majority of children who participated had parents but owing to their financial difficulties, they attend non-formal education sessions held by the Street Children Assistance Development Programme (SCADP). Validation workshops with SCADP, a local NGO partner of EvC in Cambodia and with children participating in the projects of SCADP supported by EvC were also carried out.

The countries covered in the assessment for Asia include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos.

There are several limitations to this study. The following groups of children were excluded from this assessment

- Children who are separated as a result of armed conflict – this includes child soldiers
- Children who are separated from their parent(s) and communities because of natural disasters/emergencies or any other events or situations, which cause them to leave their homes and become internal migrants and refugees.

The availability of time allotted and resource constraints limited the scope of primary data gathering in Cambodia and India. Most of the NGOs who were contacted by the consultants were working with various categories of children in difficult situations. For them, the concept of separated children was difficult to understand initially and it took time to answer some of the questions. Information from the secondary sources was not exhaustive and was not easily available.

2.0 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The concept of 'South Asia' as a region is a colonial contribution after India and Pakistan became independent. The South Asian countries share a common political history and exhibit similarities in social and cultural situation and economic strategies. The geo-political evolution of the present day South Asia was through restructuring the Indian sub-continent through the superimposition of state boundaries on an adjoining cultural landmass and economic space. The current boundaries have a specific characteristic, where South Asian countries do not share borders with each other, except with and through India. This makes the region geo-politically 'Indo-centric' and inherently bilateral in intra-regional interactions. Political dynamics in the South Asian countries for more than fifty years have evolved on this given infrastructure of cultural and historical inheritance, geo-political construction and economic space.

The search of legitimacy by the authoritarian forces (like in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan) and the struggle for democratic power (such as in Sri Lanka and India) has both led to the mobilization of sectarian constituencies. This also has other complex dimensions related to the unleashing of globalization, explosion of information, aspirations and identity and uneven distribution of the fruits of development. The problem of the rise of religious sectarianism in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies in the region has led to the alienation of minorities and given rise to ethnic aspirations and separatist movements. The politics of South Asian states is also marked by the cycle of democratic distortions and resurgence. South Asia is

passing through a process of national integration in the respective countries, which is both violent and disruptive, creating problems of internal and regional insecurity.

The present day South Asia is marked by two incompatible features: (i) its rich inheritance of historical evolution and cultural contiguity, its geo-political structuring and its economic aspirations and potential; and (ii) its intense dissonance as a product of its political dynamics, colonial legacies and regional spread of domestic conflicts. In addition to the already existing widespread poverty and marginalization, India and Sri Lanka suffered consequent to the Tsunami disaster of 2004 and more recently India and Pakistan due to the earthquakes. Both these natural disasters pose challenges for the wellbeing of separated children in the region.

There are three fold challenges confronting contemporary South Asia. They are the challenge of unipolar world and globalization at the level of the world order, the challenge of upsurge in people's aspirations and expectations from within the South Asian societies and the challenge of terrorism haunting most of the South Asian states.

Globalization has both positive and negative implications for South Asia, in terms of internal economic reforms, harnessing of common regional resources, creating and expanding trade flows within the region as also with the wider international community, coping with global trading regime, investment flows and technology transfers, and in terms of managing explosion of information and migratory movements. South Asian states are getting sensitive towards these opportunities and pressures.

South Asia has a population size of 1.44 billion, more than 22 percent of the world's population. Among the constituent nations, India accounts for more than 75 percent of the population (See Table1 in the Appendix). Therefore, an analysis of the situation in the region using any development indicator could be influenced by the Indian situation. However, these nations, with the exception of Sri Lanka, are comparable in their social and economic development situation.

The contrasting picture of Sri Lanka is characterized by low level of economic development with appreciable social development; its health and education situation is comparable to that of more developed nations. In other nations, the human development index is low; it ranges from 0.520 in Bangladesh to 0.602 in India. While in the other nations the life expectancy at birth ranges between 61 to 64 years, it is 73 years in Sri Lanka; similarly, the adult literacy rate in Sri Lanka is 92 whereas it varies from 40 to 57 in the other countries in the region.

These nations are vulnerable to various natural hazards like cyclones, floods and earthquakes; these in recent years have claimed several lives and have been a major cause of displacement of people; the worst affected being women and children. Various blends of poverty, population growth, changing consumption patterns, industrialization and unequal resource distribution have affected their development efforts.

South Asian economies are based primarily on agriculture; the decline in its share to the GDP has aggravated rural poverty in these nations. In all these countries the per capita GDP is very low compared to developed countries; the situation is pathetic particularly in Nepal where the per capita GDP is as low as US\$ 240 and in Pakistan where the annual growth in per capita GDP is a low 1.1 percent.

Considerable poverty, high unemployment rate and landlessness, recurrent disasters in the region, ill effects of globalization including the fiscal pressures on governments, and the spread HIV/AIDS, all make the situation of separated children worse and an extrapolation on the future would show a bleak situation.

The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) comprising of six countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and People's Republic of China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam) inhabits about 300 million people. A great majority of these people live in rural areas where they lead subsistence or semi-subsistence agricultural life. While traditional lifestyles and deep-rooted customs and beliefs have been scarcely altered by time, the area is now undergoing great changes and is becoming increasingly modernized and industrialized. The Mekong countries are gradually

shifting from subsistence farming to more diversified economies, and to more open, market-based systems. In parallel with this are the growing commercial relations among the six Mekong countries, notably in terms of cross-border trade, investment, and labor mobility. Moreover, natural resources, particularly hydropower, are beginning to be developed and utilized on a sub regional basis.

The rich human and natural resource endowments of the Mekong region have made it a new frontier of Asian economic growth. Still much of its population remains poor. The gross domestic product per capita is about \$1 a day in most of the region. Despite significant economic growth, poverty is still widespread. The challenges include the disparities between urban and rural communities, growing gap between the rich and the poor, inadequate attention to the special needs of ethnic minorities, gender inequities, lack of access to basic health and education and inadequate protection of the environment on which traditional livelihoods depend.

While *Cambodia* has made important socioeconomic gains over the past decade, poverty remains widespread and intense. Thirty to forty percent of the population is below poverty line and inequality appears to be widening. The population lacks education and productive skills, particularly in the countryside, which suffer from an almost total lack of infrastructure. The government is a multiparty democracy with a constitutional monarchy since 1993. Official donors pledged US\$504 million in aid for 2005 on the condition that the Cambodian government takes steps to address rampant corruption.

In 1975 the Communist Pathet Lao took control of *Laos'* government, ending a six-century old monarchy. Initial close ties to Vietnam and socialization were replaced with a gradual return to private enterprise, liberalization of foreign investment laws, and admission into ASEAN in 1997. Preliminary findings of the Third Expenditure and Consumption Survey in 2004 showed that the incidence of poverty declined to 32.7 percent in 2003 from 39.1 percent in 1998, partly as a result of economic growth in recent years. Laos remains a country with primitive infrastructure and subsistence agriculture providing 80 percent of the total employment.

A military junta remains in political power in *Myanmar*, suppressing democracy movements starting in 1988 and ignoring the results of the 1990 legislative elections where the main opposition party won a landslide victory. It is a resource rich country that suffers from government controls, inefficient economic policies, and abject rural poverty. The social estimate of poverty incidence in *Myanmar* at almost 23 percent in 1997 suggests that poverty is not as widespread as in other countries with a comparable level of per capita income. However, a fall in spending on social services such as health, education, and social welfare relative to GDP indicates that the poor are receiving less assistance.

In *Thailand*, a constitutional monarchy runs the government. The country has a well-developed infrastructure, a free-enterprise economy, and it welcomes foreign investment. Thailand's economic expansion slowed in 2004, to a still strong 6.1 percent from 6.9 percent in 2003. The deceleration was attributable to a prolonged drought, avian flu, increasing oil prices, and unrest in the southern provinces. The population below poverty line was estimated to be 10 percent in 2004.

Communist *Vietnam* is a densely populated, developing country that has gradually recovered from the ravages of war, the loss of financial support from the old Soviet bloc, and the rigidities of a centrally planned economy. Strong economic growth in recent years has helped reduce the number of Vietnamese households in poverty; the level of poverty was reduced from 11.0 percent in 2003 to 8.3 percent in 2004. The country continues to experience protests from the Montagnard ethnic minority over the loss of their land to the Vietnamese settlers and religious prosecution.

3.0 FORMS, MAGNITUDE AND CAUSES OF CHILD SEPARATION

The major forms of child separation observed in Asia are given below

- ◆ Child labour
- ◆ Children in commercial sex
- ◆ Street children
- ◆ Trafficked/voluntarily migrated children
- ◆ Children affected by HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Children in residential care
- ◆ Children separated due to conflicts, war or natural disasters
- ◆ Child beggars

Though these can be considered as the broad categories of children separated from their parents, quite often one may find sub-categories within these broad categories. For instance, the category 'child labour' is sometimes divided into sub-categories like 'part time child labour', 'full time child labour' and into 'domestic child labour', 'children in worst forms of child labour', or 'bonded child labour'.

A comparison across countries on the magnitude of each these categories of separated children showed that there are inter-country differences and there is a notable variation between South Asia and Southeast Asia. In all the South Asian nations, the most dominant form of child separation is related to child labour. The next two significant categories are street children and children exploited for commercial sex, though there are differences across nations on the relative extent of these issues. In Southeast Asia, on the other hand, children separated due to trafficking/voluntary migration, children exploited for commercial sex, begging, and child labour are the dominant categories, in that order. The magnitude of separation is not available for Asia as a whole; however, estimates of the number of children in each category of separated children are often available country-wise. The magnitude of various forms of child separation in individual nations as reported by various sources is presented in Table 1.

3.1 Child Labour

Child labour could be categorized into three groups: domestic labour, bonded children and working children. In both South Asia and Southeast Asia girls predominate in domestic child labour. Most of the boys work either in formal industries or in agriculture. Child labour is present in industries like matches, fireworks, explosives, glasses and bangles, beedi making, carpet weaving, lock making, brassware making, export oriented garments industries, gem polishing export industry, leather units and diamond industries. Bonded labour is rare in Southeast Asia, but is very much prevalent in South Asian nations such as Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, and to a lesser extent in Nepal.

The main reasons for child labour are poverty and landlessness. Parents send their children as migrants to earn a supplementary income for the family instead of schooling. Other major reasons include lack of accessibility to education and lack of basic facilities in schools.

Child workers work long hours for minimum wages. Their working conditions are especially hard, often not providing for proper physical and mental development. They endure health hazards and potential abuse. Employers also capitalize on the docility of children, recognizing that they cannot legally form unions to change their conditions. They are confined to the places of their work. This was true of child domestic workers in Thailand who were hardly paid their salary and were not allowed to leave the premises of work. Armed guards prevented other child workers or they were working in the sea.

3.2 Children used for Commercial Sexual exploitation

Children are used as commercial sex workers and are abused in their work places as well. Children are powerless to resist abuse by employers, and adult workers in work places. They are also cheated with promises of gifts and other facilities

Middlemen often act as agents to get children to the city. They lend money to families who must pay back through their daughter's work. Almost all such children end up as commercial sex workers. Once they are caught up in this, they find it impossible to escape from this situation.

CSEC is a fundamental violation of human rights that results in serious psychological, emotional and physical trauma. It severely curtails the child's rights to development and participation, in turn perpetuating a child's vulnerability and other conditions conducive to child abuse and exploitation. Children involved in CSEC are often separated from their family, deprived of their right to education, their voices not heard, and at risk of HIV/AIDS/STI infection.

The major reasons why children are drawn into prostitution are:

- *Demand* – recent studies suggest that up to 95 percent of clients of child sex workers are local men or men from neighboring countries. Cultural mores such as virginity-seeking and child marriage provide further impetus to this demand. CSEC has become a business where the child is rendered an object rather than a person with rights and interests.
- *Poverty* is a commonly cited reason by children as to why they became involved in prostitution. Limited employment opportunities, especially in rural areas, restricted

Table 1: Magnitude of Child Separation in Asian Countries

1. Bangladesh

- Out of the 445, 226 street children in Bangladesh, 75 percent are in Dhakka city and 47 percent are girls; the average daily income is US \$ 0.55
- It is reported that the number of street children is increasing.
- Children 5-14 who are orphaned due to all causes (1999-2003): 5300,000.
- About 400,000 children below 15 years work in urban areas.
- Over 1 Million women and children were trafficked out of Bangladesh during the last 30 years.
- Between 2001- 2003, at least 1008 Bangladeshis were trafficked out of the country; during this period, 1116 women and children were rescued from traffickers.
- Child marriage 65 percent.

2. Cambodia

- Survey indicates that 30 to 35 percent of all sex workers in Mekong sub-region of Southeast Asia are between 12-17 years
- In Cambodia, children comprise of 16 to 33 percent of all sex workers
- In Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 27,950 children were engaged as child domestic workers, 44 percent of them are 7-11 years old
- One in four orphans in Cambodia in 2010 would be due to HIV/AIDS
- Approximately 11,500 children are in institutional care and 8,878 children in non-residential care such as outreach programmes and street children homes

3. India

- Child Labourers in Delhi - 400,000
- Street Workers in Delhi - 100,000
- Street Workers in Hyderabad - 30,000
- Separated Children in India (below 15 years) - 16,546,000
- Orphaned Children in India (below 15 years) - 770,000
- Child labour in India is 14 percent of children aged 5-14
- Exact Number of Children Working in many industries is not available
- Bonded Girl labour, aged 7-14 years in Cottonseed production - 400,000 (of which 250,000 are working in Andhra Pradesh)
- Since the inception of Scheme for Bonded Labour in 1978-79, 50827 bonded labourers were identified till 2003, of which 49027 were released
- Children who are orphaned due to all causes is 35,000,000
- India has the largest number of AIDS orphans (120,000)
- About 14 percent of HIV/AIDS cases are children below 14 years
- Number of children in commercial sex work in India - 300,000
- Of the 900,000 sex workers in India, 30% are believed to be children
- Number of children in sex work is increasing at 8-10 percent per annum
- About 7,000 sex workers cross the border from Nepal to India every year
- Child marriage is 46 percent.

4. Nepal

- About 150 thousand children work in carpet industry in Nepal
- The total number of child labourers is 1500,000 to 2600,000.
- There are about 5000 street children in Nepal
- Carpet industries in Nepal are used as the safest transit place for trafficking children.
- About 200, 000 Nepali women and children are trafficked to India of which 20 percent are children under 16 years.
- About 34 percent of marriages are to children below 16 years, 7 percent to girls below 10 years.
- UNICEF estimates that there are 30,000 street children in Nepal more than 60 percent belong to Dalit community.
- ILO estimates that 4000 children are working as rag pickers in Nepal ; 88 percent boys.
- A rapid assessment by ILO in 2001 shows that in addition to 4000 rag pickers, there are 55,000 domestic workers, 46,029 child porters, 57,000 bonded child laborers, 12,000 girls trafficked, about 20 percent of sex workers in Nepal are children below 16 years.
- About 30 percent of the "People's Army" of Nepali Maoist insurgent comprise child recruits.
- 127, 000 children work in worst forms of child labour.
- Of about 100,000 Bhutanees refugees living in six refugee camps, 43,000 are children.
- Number of detained children in 2002 was 75, number of children of jailed parents 100.
- Children orphaned due to all causes is 1,000,000

5. Pakistan

- Child Labour 1996: 3. 3 Million
(ILO Estimates) 2000 : 2. 9 Million
- Bonded Labour Liberation Front estimates there are 8 million children bounded of which 1. 2 million engaged in carpet industry.
- Another estimate put the number of child labour in Pakistan as 3. 5 million.
- SPARC estimates the number of child labourers as 8 Million, with two-thirds employed full time.
- No. of child prostitutes in Pakistan 20,000 – 40,000.
- About 10,000 street children (having no connection with family)
- About 1. 2 million street children in Pakistan, many work 12-15 hours a day, earn around Rs. 75 (US \$ 1. 25). The number of street children is on the rise.
- Around 4,500 children are in detention in Pakistan; of them more than 3,000 have not been convicted any offence (conviction rate is only 15 – 20%).
- Children orphaned due to all causes is 4,800,000

6. Sri Lanka

- About 300, 000 child labourers in Sri Lanka (1percent of child population in the age group 5-14 years)
- Approximately 1 million children are directly affected by conflict in Sri Lanka, causing child separation
- NGOs estimate that there are 4,500 street children in Sri Lanka (2000 in Colombo and 2500 outside it) with 10,000 children at risk.
- Children orphaned due to all causes is 340,000

7. Thailand

- As of January 2005, about 170,000 child beggars were found in Bangkok, 99 percent of whom were Cambodians and the remaining were from Burma and Thailand
- One in three orphans in 2010 would be due to HIV/AIDS

8. Vietnam

- Official statistics show that 25,000 children are in the institutional care while information gathered from 61 provinces show that 14,574 children live in institutions

their choices. Increasing exposure to images of affluence on mass media enhances their perception of their poverty and raises expectations of material gain.

- Quality *education* can allow children to find ways to support themselves and their families and reduce the chances of being exploited
- *Family dysfunction* including divorce, domestic violence, sexual abuse, drug abuse, and loss of one or both parents are known to play a role in increasing children's vulnerability to CSEC. In some studies, premature sexual activity is a factor

influencing children's initiation into sex work.

- *Families need support in 'caring for children* in order to reduce the risk of children leaving home early, making them potentially vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Also, interventions are needed when sexual abuse and domestic violence occur at home.
- *Cultural attitudes* that accord subordinate status to girls, coupled with the general lack of understanding regarding the importance of child rights have heightened the levels of vulnerability. In certain parts of the region, children – girls in particular – are seen as a commodity, making it acceptable for some families to 'sell' their children and for men to purchase children for sex. Myths such as having sex with a virgin can cure HIV/AIDS, sex tourism targeting children, and the internet, which have played a negative role in promoting child pornography have contributed to increasing levels of child vulnerability.
- Evidence from studies suggest that *peer pressure* is increasingly playing a part in either influencing children to enter sex work or to make decisions that increase their vulnerability to trafficking or CSEC.
- *Absence of necessary knowledge and skills* by parents, communities, religious and community leaders, teachers, law enforcement officers, and health and social service providers limit the action they can take regarding CSEC.
- *Trafficking* ensures that demand is sustained, and in some cases increased, by guaranteeing the availability of children for commercial sex. Lack of education and knowledge about the realities of migration sometime results in parents believing traffickers' false promises of a better future for their children.
- *Gender bias* equates the female child as not having the potential to earn as well an income as a male child. Hence she is less likely to be educated, and more likely to be introduced into the informal work sector as soon as possible.
- *Lack of law enforcement*, laxity in its enforcement and corruption are also the major obstacles in ending CSEC.
- *Increasing materialism and consumerism* have placed enormous pressure on families and children to earn money outside the traditional sources. Prostitution is often viewed as comparatively lucrative and would enable families to accumulate material goods.

3.3 Street Children

This is one of the major categories of separated children especially in South Asia. These are children who mostly run away from home or forced to come to the street because they are abandoned by the parents or for other reasons.

The children come to the street because of poverty at home. Those who have an unpleasant or traumatic home environment, cruelty of stepparents, abuse from relatives, unemployment, and alcoholism of the father leave home. Their tolerance level for endurance is very low and they take the drastic decision of leaving the family. Some of them run away because of the fear of pressure at home to perform beyond their capacity, glamour of city life or peer pressure.

Most of the street children are street smart and find themselves some work though it may not be steady. They become rag pickers, work as coolies in railway stations and do odd jobs like tea boys. Some of them get into the hands of anti social elements and are introduced to small crimes like pick-pocketing and small thefts. They do not have the habit of saving. They spent all the money they earn that day itself. When their needs become more, they resort to drug peddling and anti social activities.

Most of the street children are continuously on the move and stay in groups. The elder children take care of young children. They have a strong bond and a sense of solidarity among themselves. Very often they get into trouble with the police. They face problems from antisocial elements. Some of them are maimed and forced into beggary. Girls after the age of 10 are forced into prostitution. Some children are hired by the traffickers into working as child labourers and are unable to escape from their hold. Because of their low income they suffer

from malnutrition. As they are introduced to sex very early in life, they are in danger of contracting diseases like HIV/AIDS. They also fall victims to diseases like Malaria and other communicable diseases.

3.4 Trafficked/Voluntarily Migrated Children

This is treated here as a separate section since it is reported as one of the most common forms of child separation in Southeast Asia. While voluntary migration exists in South Asia also, these children are mostly found as child labourers or as street children. Trafficking of children in South Asia is particularly associated with sexual exploitation than any other form of child abuse.

While exact figures are impossible to confirm, about a third of the global trafficking in women and children occurs within or from Southeast Asia, as place of origin, destination, and/or transit point. Trafficking is most serious in the Greater Mekong Sub-region encompassing Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam where borders are easy to cross and economic disparities are great. Owing to the clandestine nature of trafficking, it is difficult to count the number of children victimized by this practice. There is a close link between migration and trafficking. In many cases, young people search for better employment opportunities and a better future, only to find themselves in exploitative situations when they reach their final destination.

Key factors that contribute to the trafficking of children or their voluntary migration are

- Poverty and lack of employment opportunities force children and adults to seek alternative forms of survival.
- Rapid and uneven economic growth has led to increased levels of migration from poorer to richer areas, both internally and across borders.
- Access to electronic media and the widening reach of advertisements has exposed children to images of affluence that promote consumerism. Consequently, unrealistic expectations and material aspirations are drawing people away from rural livelihoods to urban areas where they are vulnerable to abuse.
- Lack of quality education and lack of access to information regarding the realities of migration prevents children and their caregivers from making informed choices.
- Researches have shown that while no education increases the chance of being directly co-opted into exploitative situations, having *some* education can lead to raised expectations, dissatisfaction with rural and/or agrarian lifestyle and an increased consciousness of the outside world. Traffickers for their commercial value and impressionability target girls who have had some education.
- Abusive family environments (sometimes influenced by alcohol and drug addiction and often associated with step-parents) encourage children to leave home, thus putting them at risk of being trafficked.
- Gender inequalities leading to a disregard for the rights and well being of girls.
- Armed conflict or war situations push refugees out of their homes and communities, and into situations of extreme vulnerability.
- Lack of citizenship is a major vulnerability factor for ethnic minority children and those whose births are not registered.

3.5 Children in Residential Care

All the nations in the region have orphanages supported by government, and those run by non-governmental organizations. Also, there are certified schools for children in conflict with the law. Quite often, programmes aimed at separated children do not reach those in residential care. In most cases, the developmental intervention is limited to providing education, apart from the providing basic health services.

Children stay for long periods in institutional care – many enter as babies and remain until they reach the age of 18. Although there is no systematic discrimination against children,

there are instances of maltreatment, especially against children with mental disabilities and those who were previously involved in commercial sex work. The main reasons for the institutionalization of children are

- Poverty or the inability of parents to provide food, medicines and education;
- Death or abandonment of parents, and the inability of relatives to provide care;
- Divorce, and negative attitudes towards stepchildren;
- Education and health care for children with disabilities.

These institutions are ill managed and the children are hardly given vocational training that would get them an employable skill when they leave the institutions. In certain institutions orphan children are kept with children who have problems with law. These children are transferred from home to home often and hence they do not have a sense of belonging. The self-concept of these children is generally low. Because of the number, individual attention given to the children is limited. Their character formation suffers as a consequence.

There has been criticism against the support to residential care services. On the one hand, though residential childcare is provided as an alternative to family care for children deprived of a family, the nature of services provided in these institutions is far from homely. On the other hand, it is argued that, widespread existence of such institutions and support to them may in fact promote voluntary child separation. It is agreed that such institutions are essential, but the duration of residential care should be kept to the minimum and the child should be sent back home as early as possible.

Residential care institutions are accused of various drawbacks. Apart from an institutional rather than a homely atmosphere, it is reported that these institutions are poor in quality services, especially those run by the government. Lack of trained professional staff, lack of continuity of those who are trained and inadequate funding are among the factors that make these institutions less effective.

3.6 Children Affected by HIV/AIDS

The impact of the HIV/AIDS is expected to emerge as a major cause for child separation in Asia, more so in Southeast Asia in the near future. A study conducted by the ILO found that children of infected parents are discriminated. They are denied basic amenities and are forced to take up petty jobs to augment their income. Though many non-governmental organizations have special homes for children who are orphaned or are infected, the government interventions remain very limited. With the loss of one or both parents, the impact of HIV/AIDS is felt at various stages of a child's development: during infancy and early childhood, during middle childhood, and upon reaching adolescence. At these various points, physical, emotional, and mental growth of children are adversely affected.

In many cases, children – especially girls – must leave school to take care of the younger siblings or contribute to the family's income. Lack of education and limited occupational opportunities hinder the children's abilities to prepare for their own futures, which increases their vulnerability to malnutrition, exploitation, and HIV infection. Besides emotional distress over the loss of a parent, they may also face stigma, isolation, and discrimination from their fellow community members. A double orphan status further damages a child's support systems. The burden of care for orphaned and affected children often falls on extended families, which may already have strained resources. Children may also end up living on the street or in child-headed households, increasing their vulnerability.

While these are the major forms of child separation in Asia, the other forms found are child selling and separation consequent to domestic violence, which is increasingly prevalent in South as well as Southeast Asia.

4.0 INSTANCES OF EXISTING INTERVENTIONS

4.1 South Asia

The existing interventions among street children in Bangladesh can be classified into 13 categories. They are: street approach (rapport building), market survey (analysis of supply and demand of non hazardous jobs and identification skills required for income generation), psycho-social counseling, recreational activities, legal aid/protection, provision of health services, job placement, advocacy, networking, raising awareness of their rights, family reintegration, establishing children's self help groups and research and analysis.

Over a period of time all the South Asian countries have succeeded in making laws that are designed to prevent child labour. They have tried to ensure an improved provision of facilities at the work place. However, it is generally believed that the employers, and the government do not respect these legal provisions. Yet the governments have made an effort along with organizations like ILO to design programmes that are aimed at providing better facilities. They have also promoted education among the child workers by providing incentives on an experimental basis in selected areas. They have attempted to raise public awareness as well.

The Global Movement of Children has attempted to improve the situation of the children by involving them in their activities. The focus was on the participation of the children who were affected by the situations. This is particularly true of Pakistan and Nepal. The World Summit of Children (WSC) 1990, the establishment of the National Steering Committee in 1999 in Pakistan, organizing a Child Right Festival in 2001 with the theme 'Education Through Entertainment' and the 'Change Makers' Workshops' in Islamabad and Nepal have the children involved in their activities.

Existing interventions among street children of Sri Lanka include introduction/amendment of legislation, installation of monitoring mechanisms, establishment of administrative structures, and exposure of child abuse by NGOs and the media. Other notable activities in the country included the launching of Street Children Network, establishment of the National Child Protection Authority, Child Abuse Desk in police stations and a 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline. The NGO services ranged from provision of identity cards to street children programmes to alleviate poverty, micro enterprises, formal and non-formal education.

In India, anti-trafficking interventions are aimed at prevention/control of trafficking by various agencies. This is done through better coordination of different actors, identifying and reporting cases, increasing attention and awareness among the NGOs and providing shelter and care. The establishment of the National Child Protection Authority in Sri Lanka has succeeded in bringing together NGOs, Government, Political leaders, and Academics, in a consultative net work to advice the government as well as to undertake complementary activities. The specific activities include awareness raising, capacity building of a variety of professionals who are working with child abuse, legal reforms and monitoring of enforcement of law and protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking. Among the activities aimed at prevention were improving the local economic conditions in order to reduce trafficking, education of families, programmes to enhance livelihood skills and improving the awareness of the public and community leaders. Schools for non-formal education and multipurpose centers for children are the other major interventions to reduce trafficking. They are also aimed at enhancing accessibility to education and other learning and recreational opportunities. Attempts have been made in the region in order to establish an effective net working and linkage between government, NGOs and Community Based Organizations so that the sustainability is ensured.

India and Nepal have much legislation to protect the rights of the children. India has progressive policies and the Juvenile Justice Act is comprehensive. India is a signatory to the Child Rights Convention. The Constitution of India itself has a section on child protection. Sri Lanka has initiated a number of legislations like the National Plan of Action for Children, the establishment of the National Child protection Authority and the Child Abuse Desk at police stations. Pakistan is one of the first countries to sign the CRC. In spite of it all, the general feeling is that they are not implemented adequately. Those who are to implement these do not have a child friendly attitude. Many of them look at these children as problem children rather

than as children who are victims of circumstances or victims of an unjust system. If the laws are to be implemented in letter and spirit, the law enforcing authorities like the police have to be taught the rights of children and train them to have a child friendly attitude. Another important step is training the children themselves on their own rights in schools. The parents, community and the teachers also should become aware of the laws governing the children.

There are international agencies and Non Governmental Organizations that work for the Welfare of Children. Most of the International agencies are funding organizations like Plan International, Ford Foundation, UNICEF, CRY and Caritas. Most of the NGOs working for children are located in urban areas, as the children who are separated are found more in urban centers than in rural areas.

The NGOs working for children can be classified into four categories.

- Those who are working for the rights of children at the policy level and are involved in advocacy. Some of the well-known organizations are HAQ-Center for Child Rights (India), Center for Education and Communication (India), Baachpan Bacho Andolan (India), Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid (Bangladesh), and Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Pakistan).
- Those who are working with working children. These organizations work to prevent child labour. In addition, they work with these children by conducting night schools and non-formal education. They also help the children to understand their rights. Some of the organizations working in this area are Butterflies (India), CCFCL and Child Labour Action Net Work (India), VV Giri National Labour Institute (India), Child Rights Information Net Work (India), South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (Pakistan) and Arunodaya (India).
- Those who are working for Street Children. There are many NGOs who work with street children. NGOs like Butterflies work both with street children and working children. Child Line in India works with children who are in stress who contact them or referred to them by others. There are 150 NGOs who are related to Child Line in India. The Bosco institutions work in many cities for street children. Deepalya (India), Nagpada Neighbourhood House (India), Centers for Lost and Kidnapped Children (Pakistan) and Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children Environment (Bangladesh) are some of the other institutions that are working for street children.
- Those who are working with children in Institutions. The government and NGOs run institutions. The government is running more than 120 institutions for children committed to the court all over India. There are NGOs who work with specific target groups. They work with girl children who are abused at home and who need protection. Some NGOs work specifically with children whose parents are no more or affected by HIV/AIDS. There are also NGOs who are working with the special children like the handicapped. They are too numerous to give a comprehensive list. There are over 200 NGOs who are running homes for the orphans. SOS villages run home for children who are orphans in a home atmosphere. The Indian Council of Child Welfare run homes for both orphans and special children. NGOs like Mottukal (India) Mariyalaya (India) and St.Catherine's Home (India) work specifically with girls who are abused. The Society Undertaking Poor Peoples Onus for Rehabilitation (India) and Indire Gram Sudhar Santha (India) work with HIV/AIDS affected Children.

4.2 Southeast Asia

Interventions in trafficking and CSEC are linked to capacity building, advocacy, and reintegration activities, at the community level initiatives.

At the national or country level, distinctions between these two forms of separation are made and reflected in structures, NPAs, legislations, and policies. For instance, the government of Cambodia has established a National Plan of Action (NPA) against CSEC while Laos is in the process of developing their NPA. Some countries have also developed plans and policies on children that include provisions related to CSEC, such as child protection, development, the worst forms of child labour, and children in especially difficult circumstances. Committees and units within the relevant government ministries have been set up to combat trafficking and ensure child protection. Moreover, building capacity, and advocacy and awareness raising efforts are taking place in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand. On the other hand, community based initiatives comprise of child protection networks in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand. Prevention, recovery and reintegration services are made in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Cross border cooperation to combat trafficking and facilitate the return of trafficked victims are taking place among the five countries under study.

- A regional memorandum of understanding (MOU) on cooperation against trafficking in persons in the GMS countries covers prevention, repatriation, reintegration and child sensitive procedures as well as the extradition and prosecution of exploiters.
- An MOU between Thailand and Cambodia on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking
- The governments of Cambodia and Vietnam are negotiating a possible MOU to improve border controls and assist victims of trafficking
- Discussions between the governments of Thailand and Lao PDR were held towards the establishment of formal agreements and cooperation at different levels to combat trafficking.

These interventions are all part of the UNICEF East Asia Regional Project Against Abuse, Exploitation and Trafficking of Children, which cover the Mekong countries Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam, with support from the Italian government

ILO has implemented the Mekong Sub-regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women (TICW Project) from 2000-2003, covering Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan Province of China. The project aimed to reduce trafficking of women and children through capacity building, awareness raising, advocacy, and direct assistance. The TICW Project has been successful in involving member governments at various levels as shown in the issuance of relevant decrees, participation in interventions, and the provision of funding. At the community level, hundreds of families with children at risk of being trafficked have benefited from targeted income generation schemes, educational and skills training, micro-credit, and awareness-raising interventions. These were designed by local implementing agencies in consultation with target families and carried out by local people. Income generation schemes are based on local market analyses, and non-formal education materials are based on local conditions and needs. National capacity to fight trafficking in women and children has been enhanced through the development of networks and alliances. Involvement in project planning and monitoring has led to a more thorough understanding of issues among stakeholders.

Save the Children UK launched community-based initiatives against trafficking in the Mekong region. Along the border, the project sought to reduce the incidence and severity of trafficking among children and young persons in the major crossing areas. Increased awareness, skill levels, positive behavior, access to health, education, social, legal awareness and counseling services, were made available to children at risk or who have already been trafficked.

End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) is a network of organizations and individuals working together to eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights free from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. In the countries included in this assessment, ECPAT works in Thailand and Cambodia.

The Child Prostitution and Trafficking Prevention Project in Northern Thailand was established in 1998. Originally operated by ECPAT International, it is now a project of an all-Thai Foundation: The Foundation to End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. The overall objective is to provide children at risk with options to avoid entering the commercial sex industry. Recent activities have seen a strengthening of partnership with local NGOs and government organizations including network and multi-disciplinary teams. The Foundation and its partners have expanded their networks to include other groups and also works with the Local Social Development and Human Security Department to provide the prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration services for women and child victims of trafficking in Chiang Rai. The Foundation and its partners have supported preventative activities such as campaigning through radio programmes, peer-to-peer training, and research by youth on CSEC and community theatre by youth. Research on child sex tourism in Northern Thailand was conducted with assistance from the ECPAT International.

ECPAT Cambodia is established in 1995 by a group of non-governmental organizations dedicated to combating child sexual exploitation. ECPAT Cambodia activities include the production of 200,000 copies of a poster which was disseminated to all NGOs who work in the area of commercial sexual exploitation of children. It is now in the process of producing a newsletter, organizing monthly meetings of member organizations with the objective of strengthening cooperation and coordination to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Other interventions at the regional and sub-regional level to combat trafficking in Southeast Asia have been documented by the IOM in 2000.

The government of Thailand has signed bilateral agreements to combat trafficking and illegal employment in general, and begging in particular. For beggars who are rounded up, the Department of Social Development and Welfare of Thailand carries out evaluation, and trafficking victims are identified from voluntary, undocumented migrants. Identified victims receive skills training, psychosocial and medical care and other recovery services, while others are repatriated to the country of origin. However, many beggars choose to be deported back to Cambodia quickly so that they can return to Thailand to beg, just as speedily.

In Bangkok, Thailand, the Mirror Foundation has established networks with organizations, conducts a media campaign to educate the public (i.e. most beggars are actually victims of trafficking and their monetary assistance perpetuates the problem), and works with the police and social workers to investigate beggars who have been picked up from the streets. The government of Thailand is currently compiling records to provide estimates and a picture of begging in the country. In Cambodia, UNICEF is active in addressing this issue.

It is widely accepted that a development-oriented approach that reduces poverty and promotes universal education is the most effective way of addressing the causes of child labour. Non-formal education with flexible times has been introduced so that children can pursue schooling when not at work. Labour inspection is also a key intervention, although its enforcement remains a challenge.

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) under ILO has worked for the progressive elimination of child labour in several ways. It is done through country-based programmes which promote policy reform, build institutional capacity and put in place concrete measures to end child labour. They also create awareness and mobilization intended to change social attitudes and promote ratification and effective implementation of ILO child labour Conventions. Key players are the regional and country offices of ILO and UNICEF, regional and international organizations like Child Work Asia, Concern, Plan International, and country-based organizations.

In Thailand, significant progress has been made in the fight against child labour. National commitment has resulted in greater educational opportunities for Thai children. Significantly

fewer numbers of Thai children are in the labour market. National laws and policies to protect and promote children's rights are in line with international instruments. ILO/IPEC Thailand has two programmes that address child labour at present.

Save the Children, Myanmar is working to address the problem of child trafficking in Myanmar, China, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam through the following activities

- Educating children and families in border areas about the threat of trafficking
- Putting local pressure on traffickers to stop their activities
- Training children to make informed choices before they migrate for work, and raising awareness about sexual health and HIV/AIDS
- Helping to repatriate children who've been trafficked, and reintegrating them back into their families and communities.

According to a key informant at the ILO, present funding sources in the region for child labour work are the USAID, the US Department of Labor, Save the Children UK, and some unnamed American NGOs.

The key intervention for the eradication of child abuse is through the implementation of preventive measures. This entails the establishment of safety nets and community volunteers to identify children at risk. Volunteers attempt to find solutions within the community so that children will not leave, thereby reducing the chances of being trafficked or becoming beggars or living in the streets. A support activity is capacity building for social workers or their equivalent so that they are able to step in and intervene. UNICEF's project, which is supported by the Italian government, addresses the elimination of child abuse.

Little interventions in communities are carried out to reduce violence against children. To some extent, certain initiatives that are part of efforts to combat trafficking also work to reduce violence against children. Community volunteers try to ensure that solutions are found and that children do not leave.

At the national levels, most countries in the region have legislations to protect children against violence and abuse. Existing norms are to a varying degree compatible with international child rights standards. Legal provisions relating to child protection are also found in other laws, for instance, criminal laws, education laws, labour laws, and social welfare legislation. However enforcement of child protection is affected by several factors that include a lack of clear definitions of the types of violence and maltreatment in the relevant laws, contradictions between laws within the same legal framework, the lack of implementation guidelines, and lack of child friendly procedures.

To reduce the impact of parents(s) being ill or dead as a result of HIV/AIDS, present interventions in the region focus on prevention, including the provision of life skills to children. In the family, attempts to ensure that members do not become infected are emphasized, and if they are, to provide anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment. In communities, friends and neighbors of the family will provide health and support to children who are affected by HIV/AIDS. Many organizations are giving care and support to AIDS orphans by helping to look after siblings and sick family members, and ensure that they are able to attend school.

Much HIV education and prevention work is carried out in communities, informing people about dangers of HIV infection and how to avoid it, and reducing stigma and discrimination. At the regional and national levels, policies, strategic plans, and legislations incorporate the needs of AIDS orphans. Strategies, objectives, and actions identify activities to ensure that children affected by HIV/AIDS receive the care and support that they require.

The continued investigations by LICADHO, a Cambodian based NGO on child selling have turned up evidence of child trafficking by people associated with orphanages. Pressure from LICADHO, other groups, a few select Cambodian officials, and assisted by media publicity have resulted in the prosecution by the Cambodian courts of some perpetrators.

4.3 Interventions by EveryChild through partners

Bangkok YMCA Foundation

Interventions that have been successfully implemented can be seen in the work of Bangkok YMCA Foundation, a partner organization of EvC based in Thailand. The Urban Poor Development Project and Northern Child Development Project by the said organization works with poor households in slum and resettlement areas, villages in low land areas, and areas designated for hill-tribes. Assistance consisted of educational support to selected children in the form of scholarships, diversification of family's livelihood activities, raising awareness regarding human and child rights, health and HIV/AIDS, and empowering community organizations. Some indicators of the project's success are a) the formation of groups working to improve and generate more household income; b) increasing knowledge about human rights, legal issues, government policies and state welfare services among project participants; c) families' growing understanding of the importance of providing care and attention to children, including a clearer grasp of their rights and need for protection; d) children who continue their scholarships, including several who have moved out of the project sites; and e) the continued participation of parents and children, community leaders, local organizations, and school teachers and officials in various project activities.

Street Children Assistance Development Programme

SCADP has been promoting the rights of the child since its inception with technical and financial assistance from EvC since 1999. The organization has built up strong links with local government structures and communities (at the commune and district levels) and some key contacts at the national level. Their projects in Phnom Penh aims at making children working in the street realize their rights to education, health and life within the family. In Prey Veng, SCADP's project provides poor and working children access to basic health services and basic welfare, respectively.

SCADP's main interventions are on non-formal education primarily for children who cannot afford to go to regular schools due to high fee structures or due to time constraints. Parents ask them to work in the fields or do odd jobs and help at home when the parents are away eking out a living. Helping students from non-formal schools to be enrolled into formal schools, vocational training centers offering skills training on silk weaving, motor mechanic training, radio, air conditioning, TV repair and sewing are some of the skill-based training given to the children. SCADP also helped some of the graduates to start their own business or look for work for them – like in factories or other established motor taxi repair shops. Others who started their own business were provided with sewing machines of their own.

Advocacy is also undertaken by the organization mainly by involving the commune councils in many of their projects. For instance the commune council in Prey Veng helped SCADP to obtain a permit to use an abandoned building in the community to be used for their vocational training courses. They petitioned a national government agency to grant permission. Other commune councils mobilize the community to build structures for the non-formal school for the children. Community members built all of the building structures for non-formal education in their communities. They mobilized their communities well in this regard especially the commune councils.

Every Child in Partnership with SATHI in India

Sathi, a NGO supported by EveryChild is based in Bangalore. The focus of their work is: helping children on the platform, restoration of the separated children to the family, providing short term shelter to the rescued children, conducting de-addiction camps for children who have picked up the habit of drugs, working with selected families whose children are on the street and running children welfare home. They have stated that they have 50 per cent success with the children who have been sent home. There is regular follow up with these

children. They also net with other NGOs who are working in the areas where they have restored the children to the family and help the family and the children with these NGOs.

5.0 GAPS IN INTERVENTIONS

A majority of the NGOs working with separated children in South Asia work with street children and child labourers and in anti-trafficking and with child labourers in Southeast Asia. These interventions range between restoring the children back to the family and taking care of them in institutions. Those who are working with child labour are involved in education of these children and advocacy.

The numbers of NGOs in South Asia, working with children who are victims of sex abuse are limited. As the number of victims keep on increasing and these children are in danger of contracting diseases like HIV/AIDS, more NGOs are needed to work with this vulnerable group. Those who work with children of Devadasis are very few and NGOs need to look at this group seriously. They also need institutional care, as most of the time they are not welcome at home as well.

Another gap in intervention is the follow up of the children who are restored to the families. The parents are equally responsible for the child leaving home. Unless the family environment changes, the children may attempt to leave home again. The parents need counseling on how to take care of the children and make the home atmosphere child friendly. The child needs continuous monitoring and guidance as well. This requires networking between NGOs who are working with separated children in urban centers and NGOs working in rural areas from where the children migrate.

The numbers of organizations working with children who are victims of HIV/AIDS are limited both in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Though institutionalizing these children may be needed, community based support would be more beneficial to these children. They are ready ostracized by the society. Institutionalizing them will further make them isolated from the society. The aspect of community responsibility to the children who are victims of HIV/AIDS is not adequately emphasized by the organizations working on HIV/AIDS.

Though the NGOs who are working with street children run orphanages, the number of NGOs who have shelter homes for these children are less. Shelter homes give the child an opportunity to experiment with the street and help them to be in a protected environment. Once convinced of the need for a protected environment, the child will be more open either to go back home or will be willing to learn an employable skill. The shelter homes are ideal for children who have a tendency to roam around and enjoy the freedom of the street.

There is lack of sufficient information on separated children. Some countries have attempted to provide identity cards. Still the available information is limited. The government and NGOs together cater to only a small percentage of separated children. In Sri Lanka only 12 percent of the street children are provided any kind of support. In countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, there is severe shortage of professional social workers and counselors. Hence they are not able to address to psychosocial needs of these children especially those who are traumatized by abuse. Lack of skills and a permanent address often limit the children from getting better employment.

In spite of the efforts made by the government and the NGOs, there is lack of coordination between them in their work with the separated children. Sometimes they work at cross-purposes. The public, the community leaders and the children are not aware of the right of the children and hence not in a position to seek help from the appropriate sources.

Trafficking, voluntary migration (and its links to trafficking), and child labour are the forms of separation that have received the greatest attention in Southeast Asia, primarily due to their widespread occurrence, the deleterious impact these have on children's development, and the prominence derived from UN/ILO interventions. The development and implementation of

policies, programs and projects on the issue of child labour, especially the worst forms, are a continuing process that began in the early 1990s. Trafficking on the other hand, regained the spotlight in the 1980s focusing on its different forms and source of trafficked persons.

To date, interventions in Southeast Asia are largely focused on the labour or trafficking perspective, due to greater attention that these forms of separation have received and continue to receive. Education, awareness raising, economic alternatives, and advocacy at the national level are emphasized. Children affected by HIV/AIDS benefit from these types of interventions as well. Repatriation and reintegration are common when separation crosses borders. The limited staff and those who are not trained to carry out these interventions affect the beneficiaries, who are not willing to spend time on these activities, as they do not get sufficient economic returns, also affect it. This is evident in begging, where 'victims' of organized gangs or those who voluntarily and illegally enter to beg prefer to be deported back to Cambodia fast, and just as quickly, return to Thailand.

Interventions in Southeast Asia range from the regional (e.g. cross-border cooperation) and national (e.g. legislation, national plans of action) to community based initiatives such as prevention activities, and provision of livelihood skills. Most interventions are being implemented in countries where the children originate, prior to separation. However, the breadth of interventions is misleading: enforcement of laws and regulations are inadequate, and national plans of actions are not always present. Moreover, not all the interventions are present in the five countries covered in this assessment. For instance, in Lao PDR, and Cambodia, which are relatively backward in development, compared to Thailand and Vietnam – efforts are hampered by lack of capacity, corruption, and structural and systemic deficiencies. Community level interventions and geographical coverage are limited in scope and hence the numbers of children who benefit are also limited. The experience in the community does not necessarily adhere to the existing and planned policies, laws, and programmes. Nevertheless, wherever this is tried this information is absorbed and recalled by children when their views were sought regarding separation. However, no one seems to be aware of how the children use this information.

A concern that has to be addressed by those who provide care and support – whether to runaway/street children, children bereft of parents due to HIV/AIDS, etc – is sustainability. For the rural communities, supporting a growing number of orphans would become untenable. Dependence on donor support in the long run for programmes geared towards orphans is not realistic as well. There is no comprehensive mapping of interventions and organizations working on different forms of separation at the regional level. What has been presented in the previous section is limited to high profile, large, and international organizations.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Child has a right to its childhood and should be provided with opportunities for leisure and play. The best place for a child to grow up is the home, whatever the economic conditions of the family. Unfortunately, given the socio-economic-political conditions, children have become more and more vulnerable to separation from home. It is the responsibility of the family, community and governmental and non-governmental organizations to ensure that child separation is prevented and to provide needed facilities to those who are separated.

The assessment of the existing situation of child separation in Asia showed that the forms of separation in various countries are similar though the magnitude of each kind of separation varies between countries. There are many types of separation in the region, but interventions are limited. The causes of separation, in general, are similar in South and Southeast Asia; but the relative importance of one or the other causes differs across nations. It is clear therefore that many of the recommendations for further interventions can be applicable to both the sub-regions (South and Southeast Asia). However, interventions in individual countries should consider the relative magnitude of each form of separation, the predominant causes and the gaps in interventions at different levels.

In many countries there are inadequate, sometimes inconsistent legislation to address the issues of trafficking, child labour, child abuse, commercial exploitation of children, and child

selling. And in many instances these are not implemented. Adherence to international conventions needs to be improved.

NGOs should undertake advocacy with the government system, related to the economic development, education of children and decentralized administration. Such advocacy work must focus also on legislation and provision of care. Institutionalizing a child should be the last resort. If it is necessary a child could be institutionalized as long as it is needed. The focus should be to send the child back to the family at the earliest.

It is important that the governments re-look at their economic policies and identify avenues for increasing the earning capacities of poor families. There is a need to expand the livelihood base in rural areas by initiating income generating projects, and the provision of skills that will be of value when seeking employment. This will reduce separation of children from parents to earn an additional income for the family.

Another important step is making education compulsory up to the age of 14. Reduction of drop out rates and provision of quality educational facilities in rural areas should get priority attention. The school atmosphere should become attractive and the curriculum should be relevant. It is important to make sure that children are not taken out of schools for employment.

The local administration should be decentralized and the responsibility of community development should be handed over to the local bodies. They may keep a record of all the children who are under their jurisdiction and prevent these children from being separated.

In many countries, life skills education is lacking and needs to be emphasized in order to effectively increase the capacity of young people to assess and avoid risk. Children lack knowledge about trafficking and the potential dangers/exploitative situations that they may encounter when seeking better opportunities for themselves and their families outside their communities.

Unless the local communities are developed, the problem of separated children could not be adequately tackled. There is an absence of skills and knowledge in communities to protect against traffickers or recognize exploitation and violence against children. The local community should act as a pressure group.

The main focus is to see that families do not break up. If a family is at the verge of break either due to economic reasons or other reasons, the community should step in to help the family. Children who are vulnerable could be taken care of by the community either through community-based organizations, foster families or through local adoptions.

Trained personnel should administer the government run residential childcare institutions. The system of having house parents should be adopted with each house having a family and a maximum of 12-15 children. This will reduce some of the ill effects of institutionalization.

Those children who have difficulties with the laws should be given adequate facilities to train themselves in a vocation. Life coping skills needs to be taught as well.

Providing shelter homes to the street children is important. These shelter homes should be open to all the children. Without any pressure, these children could be befriended and once they are open to be befriended, steps could be initiated to contact the family and send them back to the family.

Homes of children affected by HIV/AIDS are necessary especially for children who are helpless. They need love, understanding and continuous medical care with supervision. This should not be left with the NGOs alone. The government should come forward either to run such homes or provide generous subsidy. Advocacy against stigma and discrimination regarding survivors of trafficking, CSEC, and HIV/AIDS is needed.

Other aspects that require attention are

- There is an urgent need to compile a profile of separated children in all the countries. Data available of these children are inadequate and at times outdated and scattered.
- Networking of NGOS and international agencies that are working in similar areas is a must. This will avoid duplication of work and waste of resources.
- Help to develop a more cooperative atmosphere and less of competitive atmosphere among the NGOs.
- Create a forum of the NGOs working for separated children in the region (or sub-regions) for sharing of information on the best practices and advocacy.
- Existing interventions in relation to trafficking and CSEC, especially at the community level, are still limited in terms of focus and geographical coverage. There is a need to refocus on emerging issues and to widen the geographical coverage.
- Majority of funding and interventions in the Southeast Asia region are focused on trafficking and child labour. With the growing attention being focused on other issues that relates to child protection and separation issues, donor portfolio might diversify.
- Mobilize corporate sector support for the programmes organized for the separated children.
- Organize programmes for separated children in consultation with the children and with their participation.
- Help to educate the employers who employ children in their industries to be just and make them aware of the rights of children.
- There is no comprehensive mapping of interventions, donors and organizations working on different forms of separation at the regional level. Help to prepare such a mapping.

6.1 ROLE OF EveryChild

Interventions on child separation may be of two broad types: one is the prevention of child separation and the other is working with children who are already separated from the family because of various reasons stated elsewhere in this report.

At the level of prevention, community based organizations that are working to reduce breakdown of families should be encouraged. As separation is linked to poverty, violence at home and pressure on the child to perform, the interventions should be directed at all these levels. Poverty reduction should be attempted through community development programmes, creation of job opportunities in rural areas, increasing the earning capacity of the family, ensuring minimum wages to the workers, providing improved facilities for the agricultural farmers and implementation of programmes that are appropriate for the development of the rural areas. Advocacy with the government is one of the important strategies in this approach.

In Southeast Asia, where child trafficking is one of the major causes of child separation, the community-based prevention may focus particularly on

- Making children aware of the dangers of trafficking so that they can protect themselves. Children must be provided practical skills (livelihood and life skills) that allow them to find viable alternatives to being trafficked.
- Awareness of those interacting and working with children vulnerable to trafficking should be developed to recognize the signs and respond accordingly.
- Expansion of the outreach of the existing interventions. For instance, child protection networks can also be used in tracing families of separated children or monitor missing children in the community.

EveryChild should be open to supporting those NGOs who work for the improvement of the economic condition of the rural areas and have an integrated approach to child development. The kind of service to be undertaken by the NGOs may vary from place to place and region to region. The focus of the programme should be to strengthen the family relationship and structures. This will reduce child separation to a great extent by restricting migration from rural areas and also reduce the influence of middlemen.

Another aspect that would help prevention of child separation is intervention to establish appropriate legislation. Pakistan does not have a clear policy on Child Labour though it was one of the countries that signed the CRC first. There are too many loopholes in the Indian Law on Child Labour and adoption. In Bangladesh child trafficking takes place across the border and children are taken to places like Singapore for the flesh trade. It is important to have statutory policy and systems changes and reforms. The policies have to be interpreted correctly and should be child friendly. Those who are responsible for implementing the policies should be well trained and should be in favor of children. For this advocacy with the government is important. At the same time, the community and the children should be made aware of their rights and made to demand these rights. EveryChild could encourage those NGOs who are working towards policy changes and those who create awareness of the policies in the community.

Specifically for Southeast Asia such efforts may focus on advocacy with regard to greater donor support for issues surrounding separation or in partnership with other organizations with shared concerns. In each country, advocate for a strong commitment to combat trafficking and CSEC by allocating resources for prevention, community based interventions, and reintegration; creating strong legal frameworks that comply with international legal standards, policies and programmes; and, enforcing and implementing them to protect children. Develop and enforce appropriate legislation and international mechanisms. Laws that punish people who traffic and exploit children need to be in place and enforced. Organized crime, corruption and bribery need to be properly addressed.

At the level of intervention after the separation has taken place, each category of children should be treated differently. EveryChild should support various types of residential care institutions for separated children. At the same time it should be insisted that these institutions are as close to a home atmosphere as possible.

Identification of children in domestic labour is difficult unless they themselves seek help. Even then there are organizations that are working with children in domestic labour by befriending the families that employ them. They try to get a just wage for them and reduce abuse as much as possible. The children who are working in industries could be given education and training. There are a number of NGOs who work with them. They give them non-formal education and help them to acquire a skill. They use mobile units so that they could move as close to the children as possible. This is a very needed service as the children could be helped to come out of their bonded condition and get out of the circle of poverty which has forced them to work. In addition to these efforts, EveryChild may consider interventions with employers to improve the work conditions and facilities of child labourers.

Another group of children who are separated from the parents who need special care are those who have been sexually exploited. Laws and legal processes should be designed so that survivors are supported, rather than punished. Services need to be in place that both rescue children from sexual exploitation and also provide them with care and support to return to normal life, and if possible, to their families.

Most of them prefer not to go home and the families also do not welcome them because of the stigma attached. They need special care and they also need training to take up an employment that would sustain them. They will need institutions that care for them and are interested in their welfare. Ensure a full reintegration and rehabilitation for survivors of trafficking. Services might include hotlines that children can call to ask for help or safe shelters. Survivors of trafficking may need special assistance and medical services. This could also apply to children who are separated from the families because their parents are in prison. These children also carry a stigma and need protection. There are very few organizations that are working with these children. They need encouragement.

Other interventions by EveryChild in dealing with trafficking of children may include:

- Identify entry points and source communities of victims of trafficking, voluntary migrants, etc. Defining 'geographical priorities' will direct attention to locations where children are most vulnerable to separation.
- Country level mapping of key players is necessary, which can be carried out once a program has been developed and prior to implementation in selected countries.
- Thorough investigations should be undertaken to identify and punish perpetrators of trafficking children for adoption. Unscrupulous adoption-related acts, which constitute criminal offences under Cambodian laws and other receiving countries, should be prosecuted.

EveryChild may establish centers, which would induce children to get off the streets; offer schooling in less formal settings/arrangements; provide medical care, food, security, and counseling; provide alternative and viable livelihood skills; and the acquisition of knowledge and life skills. These centers should emphasize alternatives that closely or eventually respond to the causes why children became separated in the first place.

Children separated because of HIV/AIDS are a special group. They need constant medical attention, support, and love. The number of these homes is very limited. The number of children affected is on the increase. There are some NGOs who are experimenting with community-based rehabilitation. Local administration system could take up this responsibility and work with the NGOs working in this area. These efforts could be supported. In addition institutional support for these children is also a must.

Yet another group that should be a major concern for EveryChild is the children who have fallen victims to drugs, glue and alcohol. There are institutions that are working with the children who need help to come out of these habits. This effort also needs the support of EveryChild.

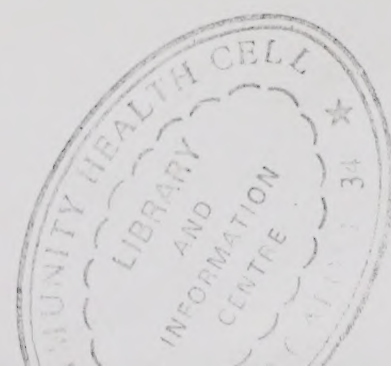
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